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Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women

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Implementation of articles 21 and 22 of the Convention

Reports by specialized agencies on the implementation of the Convention in areas falling within the scope of their activities

Report of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

Summary

In accordance with article 22 of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, the specialized agencies of the United Nations were invited to submit to the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women reports on the implementation of the Convention in areas falling within the scope of their activities. The present report contains information on the measures taken by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization to implement the provisions of the Convention in the countries whose national reports will be considered by the Committee at its sixty-fifth session.

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I. Introduction

1. At its sixty-fifth session, the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women will examine the national reports of Argentina, Armenia, Bangladesh, Belarus, Bhutan, Burundi, Canada, Estonia, Honduras, the Netherlands and Switzerland. The status of implementation of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women in Antigua and Barbuda will be examined in the absence of a report of the State party.

2. As a specialized agency of the United Nations system, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) contributes to the building of peace, the alleviation of poverty, the promotion of sustainable development and intercultural dialogue through education, the sciences, culture, and communication and information. In accordance with the UNESCO medium-term strategy for 2014-2021, gender equality is a global priority of the Organization. It is pursued through a two-pronged approach: (a) gender-specific programming and (b) mainstreaming of gender equality perspectives into all the fields of competence of UNESCO.

3. UNESCO has a major role and responsibility within the United Nations system for the implementation of the Convention. Article 10 of the Convention provides that States parties shall take all appropriate measures to eliminate discrimination against women in order to ensure to them equal rights with men in the field of education. The right to education is at the very heart of the mission of UNESCO and represents an integral part of its constitutional mandate.

4. Efforts by UNESCO to promote women's empowerment, women's rights and gender equality are guided by its medium-term strategy for 2014-2021, its biennial and quadrennial programme and budget documents, its organization-wide gender equality action plan for 2014-2021, which supports and guides the implementation of its global "priority gender equality", the Convention, the Beijing Platform for Action, as well as resolutions and international and regional instruments relevant to its areas of action.

5. The UNESCO commitment to pursuing the priority of gender equality is facilitated by the Division for Gender Equality in the Office of the Director General. As the UNESCO focal point for gender equality, the Division provides policy guidance and recommendations to senior management and programme sectors for mainstreaming gender equality considerations in UNESCO policies, strategies and programmes; carries out capacity-building; monitors gender parity and work-life balance within the secretariat and develops and establishes partnerships with other United Nations bodies, regional bodies, intergovernmental organizations, non-governmental organizations, private foundations and private sector partners that support women's empowerment and gender equality initiatives.

II. Measures taken to implement the provisions of the Convention in the countries to be considered at the sixty-fifth session

Antigua and Barbuda

6. Antigua and Barbuda is not a party to the UNESCO Convention against Discrimination in Education (1960). The country did not report to the seventh consultation of member States on the implementation of the Convention or the UNESCO recommendation against discrimination in education.

7. Under the Constitution of Antigua and Barbuda, no person shall be treated in a discriminatory manner by any person acting by virtue of any law or in the performance of the functions of any public office or any public authority. The word "discriminatory" means affording different treatment to different persons wholly or mainly on the basis of their race, place of origin, political opinions or affiliations, colour, creed or sex.

8. The education system in Antigua and Barbuda promotes the education of the people of Antigua and Barbuda through the establishment of educational institutions that foster the spiritual, cultural, moral, intellectual, physical, social and economic development of the community. The ultimate goal is the development of self-worth through a positive educational environment.

9. The system promotes understanding of the role of science and technology in society, together with the development of scientific and technological skills, appreciation and understanding of the creative arts, personal health and fitness and the creative use of leisure time.

10. The ministries responsible for education, health and labour offer family life education programmes to promote the equal responsibility of women and men in the care and socialization of children.

Argentina

11. Argentina has been a party to the UNESCO Convention against Discrimination in Education (1960) since 30 October 1963. The country did not report to the seventh consultation of member States on the implementation of the Convention.

12. In the Constitution of Argentina, the ethnic and cultural pre-existence of indigenous peoples is emphasized, and it guarantees respect for their identity and the right to bilingual intercultural education. Article 14 of the Constitution establishes that all inhabitants of the nation are entitled to fundamental rights, in accordance with the laws that regulate their exercise, inter alia, to teach and to learn. Under article 75, Congress is empowered to provide for the prosperity of the country, the advancement and welfare of all the provinces and the progress of education, including the drawing up of general and university educational plans.

13. The Constitution, which establishes the conditions for each province to guarantee access to education, provides that the provinces shall enact laws and undertake organizing and grass-roots measures that will ensure participation in the public education system and the autonomy and self-sufficiency of national

universities. Articles 5 and 75 of the Constitution also set out the principles of non-discrimination, equity and free access with regard to public education. Those principles are explained further in the National Education Law, by which the State guarantees all citizens access to information and knowledge, the conditions to remain at and graduate from all levels of the education system, and that all levels and types of public education are free of charge. Under articles 4 and 11 of the Law, all levels and types of education shall be free of charge.

14. The Constitution lays the foundation for an education aimed at the consolidation of national unity while respecting local and provincial differences. It assigns constitutional status to human rights treaties, including the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights and the Convention on the Rights of the Child. Some articles include affirmative action measures in favour of various vulnerable groups, such as persons with disabilities.

15. Since 2006, with the enactment of the National Education Law, Argentina has had a regulatory instrument covering all levels and categories of education, applicable country-wide. The Law includes the requirement to ensure conditions of equality, while respecting existing differences among people, rejecting discrimination on the basis of gender or for any other reason and promoting the understanding of the concept of the elimination of all discrimination at all levels and types of education.

16. The National Council of Education was created to establish, seek agreement on and coordinate national education policy, while ensuring the alignment and harmonization of the national education system. Consultative bodies of the Council have also been established, namely, the Education Policy Council, the Economic and Social Council and the Council for Curriculum Reform.

17. According to the National Education Law, the country's education system must guarantee high-quality, comprehensive, free schooling based upon the principles of equality, equity, participation and lifelong education. Article 1 of the Law regulates the rights to teach and to learn that are enshrined in the Constitution and in the international treaties that have been incorporated into it. It incorporates the principles stipulated in the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, the Convention on the Rights of the Child, the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and the American Convention on Human Rights and the Optional Protocol thereto, among other treaties.

18. Article 8 of the National Education Law provides that education will provide the opportunities necessary to develop and strengthen the lifelong comprehensive training of all persons and to promote in each student the capacity to define his or her life project, on the basis of the values of freedom, peace, solidarity, equality, respect for diversity, justice, responsibility and the common good. Furthermore, article 10 of that law provides that the State shall not sign bilateral or multilateral free trade agreements that would result in education being considered as a for-profit service or encourage any market-driven transformation of public education. Article 2 (b) of the Law for Education Funding takes into account the need to increase investment so that a minimum of 10 years of compulsory schooling is ensured for all children and young people.

19. According to the National Education Law, primary education seeks to ensure that all boys and girls have access to a body of general knowledge that will allow

them to participate fully in family, school and community life in a way that is appropriate for their age. Public education is secular, however, students may request instruction in the religion of their choice, which may be conducted in school or at a religious institution. The Constitution and other laws and policies protect religious freedom and, in practice, the Government generally enforces those protections.

20. In Argentina, with the goal of guaranteeing the right to education and school integration and favouring the social insertion of persons with disabilities, the National Education Law obliges authorities in each jurisdiction to take the measures necessary to facilitate comprehensive education that includes access to technological, artistic and cultural knowledge, ensure coverage for the special education services, transportation, technical and material resources needed to develop the school curriculum and guarantee the physical accessibility of all school buildings.

21. As part of compulsory schooling, home and in-hospital schooling has been established for the early childhood, primary and secondary levels to guarantee the right to education for all students who, for health reasons, are not able attend an educational institution regularly for at least 30 consecutive days. The aim of the provision is to guarantee equal opportunities for students, allow them to continue with their studies and reinsert them into the common system whenever possible.

22. Several gender equality-related projects within UNESCO programmes have been implemented in Argentina in the past five years. The initiative on gender diversity and intercultural dialogue, undertaken in Villa Ocampo, Argentina, targeted cultural policies that respect gender equality, women's rights and freedom of expression and ensure women's access to decision-making posts and processes. It had the overall goal of improving women's and girls' access to and participation in cultural life, including cultural heritage, creative expression and the enjoyment of cultural goods and services.

23. A project was implemented on ensuring gender equality in the field of information and communications technologies, promoting opportunities for women and combating gender stereotypes regarding women in science.

Armenia

24. Armenia has been a party to the UNESCO Convention against Discrimination in Education (1960) since 5 September 1993. The country did not report to the seventh consultation of member States on the implementation of the Convention.

25. The education system in Armenia aims at strengthening the spiritual and mental potential of the Armenian people and preserving and developing national and universal values. Some of the important principles of State policy in the field of education are: humanistic character of education, priority of universal values, free and comprehensive development of the individual, civic perception, national dignity and patriotism; accessibility, continuity, succession and conformity of education with the level of development of the student; integration into the international education system; supporting the educational process of preserving Armenian identity among Armenians in the diaspora; and secular education in educational institutions.

26. Under article 39 of the Constitution of 1995 (amended and adopted by referendum in November 2005), everyone shall have the right to an education. Basic general education shall be compulsory, except for the cases proscribed by the law. The law may establish a higher level of compulsory education. Secondary education in State educational institutions is free of charge. One of the basic principles of laws on primary and secondary education should be to ensure the availability of secondary education to every child, irrespective of family income. The law shall define the principles of autonomy in institutions of higher education. All citizens shall have the right to higher and professional education free of charge in State institutions of higher and other professional education, on the basis of competition, as prescribed by the law. General education must comply with the social and public educational order and the long-term development programmes of the country. It must also ensure that educational content is systemized, sustainable and relevant, taking into account the age and psychological and physical characteristics of the students.

27. Armenia has implemented a train-the-trainer project on gender equality in youth work, which entailed two four-day training sessions for 50 Armenian young people, with the aim of enhancing capacity-building on gender equality and promoting gender-sensitive approaches in line with UNESCO priorities and its operational strategy on youth.

Bangladesh

28. Bangladesh is not a party to the UNESCO Convention against Discrimination in Education (1960). The country did report to the seventh consultation of member States on the implementation of the Convention and the recommendation against discrimination in education.

29. Bangladesh provided details relating to inclusive education, in response to member States' concern regarding the elimination of discrimination in education against disabled persons, which focused, in the majority of cases, on the integration of disabled children into school. Bangladesh reports that the appointment of female teachers has played a vital role in increasing girls' enrolment in primary education, and the gender ratio of enrolment has now reached parity. In the educationally and economically disadvantaged districts of Bangladesh, the provision of food assistance and the payment of small stipends to parents have helped to compensate parents for the opportunity cost of sending their children to primary school. Special emphasis is placed on gender equality and equity, and measures to ensure gender parity in education have been taken.

30. With regard to the application of the Convention and the recommendation focusing on the UNESCO priority of education for all, Bangladesh has clearly indicated specific measures taken to that end. National accomplishments with respect to ensuring universal access, such as making primary schooling available free of charge, compulsory and available without discrimination or exclusion, are reflected in the report. Bangladesh has developed a non-formal educational policy framework and, since 2006, has implemented a programme for reaching children who are out of school. A six-year project on reaching children who are out of school was launched in 2004 aiming at providing access to primary education and ensuring

the retention of disadvantaged children who are currently out of school, including through the provision of small financial stipends to encourage their attendance.

31. Under article 17 of the Constitution of Bangladesh of 1972 (last amended in 2004), the State shall adopt effective measures for the following purposes: (a) establishing a uniform, mass-oriented and universal system of education and extending free and compulsory education to all children to such stage as may be determined by law; (b) relating education to the needs of society and producing properly trained and motivated citizens to serve those needs; and (c) eradicating illiteracy within such time as may be determined by law. The State shall endeavour to ensure equality of opportunity to all citizens and shall adopt effective measures to remove social and economic inequality and ensure the equitable distribution of wealth among citizens.

32. The national development plan entitled "Vision 2021" aims at building Bangladesh into a resilient, productive, innovative and prosperous nation. It is built on the enduring attributes of self-reliance, respect, tolerance, equity and integrity. All citizens should be assured a modern, sound and relevant education tailored to meet the human resources needs of a modern, progressive and technically advancing nation. There should be respect for the principles of democracy, rule of law and human rights, ensuring gender equality, the rights of indigenous populations and of all other disadvantaged people, including persons with disabilities and persons with autism, thereby valuing and nurturing the diversity and creativity of all people.

33. Primary education was made compulsory for children 6 to 10 years of age by the Compulsory Primary Education Act of 1990, which stipulates that unless there is a valid ground, the guardian of each child living in an area where primary education has been made compulsory shall have his or her child admitted to the nearest primary school in that area.

34. The introduction of free education for girls up to grade 10 and the provision of financial assistance for girls in rural areas have accelerated enrolment and improved the completion rate of girls, at the primary and secondary levels of education. Nearly 38 per cent of primary school teachers are women.

35. Several gender equality-related projects within UNESCO programmes have been implemented in Bangladesh in the past five years. The project entitled "Addressing violence against women: gender responsive programmes in the education system of Bangladesh" works with the Government towards achieving gender parity in secondary and higher education and reducing the dropout rate. Awareness-raising advocacy seminars and workshops and role-playing activities were undertaken for changing the behavioural practices that contribute to violence against women and gender biases.

36. The project "Building the capacity of community radio stations to undertake participatory programme development and communication using the community learning programme" aims at facilitating pluralistic media institutions by the adoption of gender-sensitive policies. It also advocates for strengthening community media policy and practice, while citizens, in particular young people, are empowered through the enhancement of competencies in media and information literacy. Furthermore, it aims at increasing the number of community radio stations that adapt programming guidelines to strengthen the representation of women and young people.

37. The project "Elimination of the gender gap through Moromigan, a popular folk item of Bangladesh" aims at addressing gender-related issues using the power of music, with the ultimate goal of reducing the incidence of early marriage, preventing the dowry system in rural communities, increasing awareness on reproductive health and hygiene management among adolescents and rural women, encouraging the education of girls, tackling the dropout rate among girls at the secondary school level and promoting the role of women in decision-making processes within the family.

Belarus

38. Belarus has been a party to the UNESCO Convention against Discrimination in Education (1960) since 12 February 1962. The country did not report to the seventh consultation of member States on the implementation of the Convention and the recommendation against discrimination in education.

39. As a result of reforms in the country's socioeconomic and political life, education is a priority in Belarus. The principal aims of the education system are to reproduce and constantly enrich the nation's intellectual, creative and cultural potential, instil humanist ideals in children and young people and supply the production sector with highly qualified and competitive specialists and workers. The national education system was developed on the basis of the following main principles: priority status of universal human values; national culture as the basis of education; scientific approach; orientation towards international standards in education; humanism; ecological orientation; elimination of contradictions between teaching and physical and moral education; democracy; secular character of education; and compulsory basic education.

40. Articles 49 and 50 of the Constitution stipulate that everyone shall have the right to education. Access to free, general, secondary and vocational-technical education shall be guaranteed. The State shall, in accordance with the law, guarantee the freedom of choice of the language of education and provide education free of charge.

41. The main legislative documents that regulate activities in the field of education in Belarus are the Law on Education, the Law on Languages, the Rights of the Child Act, the Rights of Minorities Act and the Act on General Principles of State Policy on Youth, among other instruments. On the basis of those laws, the general education system includes elementary, basic and secondary cycles of study, which entail 11 or 12 years of study, for pupils from 6 to 17 or 18 years of age. The State defines a set of minimum standards for the content of the general education cycles, including a list of compulsory subjects. School curricula, syllabuses and textbooks take into account the differences in the interests and capabilities of students.

42. Belarus has implemented the gender equality-related project entitled "Strengthening national capacity in the promotion of women's entrepreneurship in rural areas based on the foreign experience study". The purpose of the thematic seminar on strengthening national capacity in the promotion of women's entrepreneurship in rural areas and agriculture is to deepen the knowledge of experts on gender issues and enable them to make appropriate adjustments in the socioeconomic development plans of rural areas. The result will be the inclusion of

gender aspects in projects and programmes for sustainable rural development, with a view to meeting the needs and priorities of both men and women and improving the living standards of the rural population, creating jobs and promoting self-employment opportunities.

Bhutan

43. Bhutan is not a party to the UNESCO Convention against Discrimination in Education (1960), nor did the country report to the seventh consultation of member States on the implementation of the Convention and the recommendation against discrimination in education.

44. The overall strategy concerning education envisioned by Bhutan is to provide high-quality education, the achievement of which requires meeting the following objectives: ensure the realization of the innate potential of each and every child; instil an awareness of the nation's unique cultural heritage and values; prepare young people for the world of work; and create an awareness of the potential and importance of agriculture as an occupation.

45. Article 9 of the Constitution of 2008 stipulates that the State shall endeavour to provide education for the purposes of improving and increasing the knowledge, values and skills of the entire population, with education being directed towards the full development of the human personality.

46. Article 16 of the Constitution specifies that the State shall provide free education to all school-age children to tenth standard, and ensure that technical and professional education is made generally available and that higher education is equally accessible to all on the basis of merit. The Government provides textbooks, sports equipment, meals and boarding free of charge to rural schoolchildren, however, parents are required to contribute annually to the school development fund.

47. Education is one of the fundamental means of achieving gross national happiness, which is the framework for the overall development of Bhutan. The country has no education act, but the Government has committed to pursuing universal basic education.

48. Several gender equality-related projects within UNESCO programmes have been implemented in Bhutan in the past five years. The project "Inclusive and gender-responsive quality literacy programmes in South Asia" aims at scaling up effective youth and adult literacy programmes, with a focus on women, which reinforces the partnership of stakeholders at all levels to support the provision of literacy programmes to children who are out of school. National capacities will be strengthened to scale up inclusive and gender-responsive high-quality literacy programmes.

49. The project "Support to the development of a community radio sector in Bhutan" facilitates pluralistic media institutions, including through the adoption of gender-sensitive policies and support for strengthened community media policies and practices to empower citizens, in particular young people, through the enhancement of competencies in media and information literacy.

Burundi

50. Burundi is not a party to the UNESCO Convention against Discrimination in Education (1960), however, the country did report to the seventh consultation of member States on the implementation of the Convention and the recommendation against discrimination in education, on 10 November 2006.

51. In its report, Burundi noted that special emphasis is placed on gender equality and equity, and measures have been taken to ensure gender parity in education. Burundi has clearly indicated specific measures taken concerning the application of the Convention and the recommendation, focusing on the UNESCO priority of education for all. National accomplishments with respect to ensuring universal access, such as making primary schooling available free of charge, compulsory and available without discrimination or exclusion, are reflected in the report.

52. Article 34 of the Constitution of Burundi guarantees the right and the obligation of parents to educate their children and the obligation of the State to support them in that task. All citizens have the right to equal access to education and culture. The State has the duty to organize public education, however, the right to establish private educational institutions is also guaranteed under the conditions as established by law.

53. Primary schooling in Burundi begins at 7 years of age. Secondary schooling consists of two cycles. The first cycle, of 4 years, ensures general secondary education; the second cycle includes such areas of study as science, literature and economics, as well as technical and professional education. Universities and institutes offer post-secondary education cycles of short (2 years) and long (4 years) durations.

54. Several gender equality-related projects within UNESCO programmes have been implemented in Burundi in the past five years. A project was implemented to train teachers and peer educators with a view to strengthening and promoting youth participation in sexuality education programmes and services through institutional mechanisms, with parents, teachers and adults in the community acting as supportive partners.

55. A training workshop for women leaders on awareness-raising with regard to the management of persistent organic pollutants aimed at achieving greater transparency, strengthening accountability mechanisms and significantly strengthening marginalized groups.

56. A project to bring together and strengthen national capacities to scale up inclusive and gender-responsive high-quality literacy programmes, taking into consideration the specific socioeconomic circumstances and needs of women and girls who are illiterate or who have low literacy skills, was also implemented.

Canada

57. Canada is not a party to the UNESCO Convention against Discrimination in Education (1960), nor did the country report to the seventh consultation of member States on the implementation of the Convention and the recommendation against discrimination in education.

58. In Canada, there is no federal department of education and no integrated national system of education. Within the federal system of shared powers, the Constitution Act of 1867 provides that, in and for each province, the legislature may exclusively make laws relating to education.

59. Public education is provided free of charge to all Canadians who meet various age and residency requirements. Each province and territory has one or two departments or ministries responsible for education, headed by a minister who is almost always an elected member of the legislature and appointed to the position by the government leader of the jurisdiction.

60. The education systems in Canada work within its pluralistic society to eliminate discrimination and provide equitable and fair access to quality education for all.

61. Governments in Canada have established a solid legal framework that integrates a collection of laws and policies that prohibit discrimination on the grounds outlined in the Convention and the recommendation, namely, race, colour, sex, language, religion, political opinion, national origin, economic condition or birth. In Canada, education is a human right that is guaranteed in federal, provincial and territorial legislation.

62. Exclusive legislative responsibility for education is granted to the provinces under the Constitution Act of 1867. Similar responsibilities are delegated to the territories by the Government. The education or school act in each province or territory specifies who is entitled to attend school. Although each act is different, the overall principles are consistently applied throughout the country. All children have the right to attend a public school if they meet the age and residency requirements, and no tuition is charged to the student or the parent.

63. A continuing challenge is that aboriginal students are completing secondary school and graduating from post-secondary education at rates much lower than those of the non-aboriginal population. The many gains across provinces and territories in recent years notwithstanding, student dropout rates among aboriginal young people remain high, and the transition rate from secondary school to post-secondary education remains low.

Estonia

64. Estonia is not a party to the UNESCO Convention against Discrimination in Education (1960), nor did the country report to the seventh consultation of member States on the implementation of the Convention and the recommendation against discrimination in education.

65. Article 12 of the Constitution of Estonia states that all persons shall be equal before the law. No one may be discriminated against on the basis of nationality, race, colour, sex, language, origin, creed, political or other persuasion, financial or social status or other reasons.

66. Article 37 of the Constitution guarantees that everyone shall have the right to education. Education shall be compulsory for school-age children to the extent specified by law and free of school fees in State and local government-run general education schools. In order to make education available, State and local

governments shall maintain the necessary number of educational institutions. As determined by law, other educational institutions may be established, including private schools. Parents shall have the final decision in choosing education for their children. Everyone shall have the right to instruction in Estonian. Educational institutions established for minority groups shall choose their own language of instruction. The provision of education shall be supervised by the State.

67. Under the Basic and Upper Secondary Schools Act, general education is defined as a system of knowledge, skills, proficiency, values and rules of behaviour that enable a person to develop constantly in order to live in dignity, have self-esteem, honour his or her family, other human beings and nature, select and acquire a suitable profession, act creatively and be a responsible citizen. Education is based on the principles of humanism and democracy and the respect of human beings and laws. Education is focused on permanent change, lifelong education, sustainable development and competitiveness in the global market. Under the Education Act, all children are obliged to attend school from 7 years of age until the completion of compulsory basic education, a nine-year programme.

Honduras

68. Honduras has been a party to the UNESCO Convention against Discrimination in Education (1960) since 5 September 2013. The country did not, however, report to the seventh consultation of member States on the implementation of the Convention and the recommendation against discrimination in education.

69. Article 151 of the Constitution of Honduras states that education is an essential function of the State for the preservation, development and dissemination of culture, which must extend its benefits to society without discrimination of any kind. Public education shall be secular and based on the fundamental principles of democracy. It shall instil and promote in all students a deep feeling of Honduran patriotism and shall be directly connected with the economic and social development process of the country.

70. Under Articles 152 to 173 of the Constitution, parents have a preferential right to choose the type of education that they wish to give their children. The State has the obligation to promote the basic education of the people, creating for that purpose the necessary administrative and technical institutions, which shall be directly dependent on the Ministry of Education. The elimination of illiteracy is a primary task of the State. It is the duty of all Hondurans to cooperate in order to achieve this objective. The State recognizes and protects the freedoms of research, education and teaching. No educational establishment may provide education of a quality below the level established by the law. All teachers are provided a standard of living in accordance with the nature of their mission and an adequate pension. The State shall support and promote the education of persons with disabilities. Public education shall be free of charge, and basic education shall also be compulsory and completely at the expense of the State. The State shall set up the necessary compulsory mechanisms accordingly to make these provisions effective. The State shall preserve and promote all indigenous cultures and authentic expressions of national folklore, popular art and handicrafts.

71. Basic education in Honduras is compulsory, beginning when the pupil is 6 years of age, for a nine-year cycle. Secondary education is organized in cycles of

5 or 6 years, depending on the type of education, technical or human and social. Higher education is for the most part under the purview of the National Autonomous University of Honduras, but the establishment of private universities is also regulated by law. The cycles of higher education are from 4 to 6 years in duration, depending on the type of study.

72. Several gender equality-related projects within UNESCO programmes have been implemented in Honduras in recent years. The "Human development and peace through development of freedom of expression and access to knowledge with a plural and inclusive approach" initiative targeted women, young people and indigenous peoples. The overall goal of the project is inclusion through the granting of rights to women in the political, social, economic, cultural, environmental and other dimensions of life.

73. The project "Strengthening teaching skills working in indigenous and Afro-Honduran communities on the implementation of the intercultural bilingual education model, social inclusion and gender equity in the classroom" focused on developing training programmes for indigenous and Afro-Honduran teachers in inclusive education and gender equity. The training process will be developed by taking into account gender equality, given that education is an inclusive process, and training women, men, older persons, indigenous people and Afro-Honduran young people through participation and involvement, specifically in the field of intercultural bilingual education.

Netherlands

74. The Netherlands has been a party to the UNESCO Convention against Discrimination in Education (1960) since 25 March 1966. The country did not, however, report to the seventh consultation of member States on the implementation of the Convention and the recommendation against discrimination in education.

75. According to article 1 of the Constitution of the Netherlands, all persons should be treated equally in equal circumstances, and distinctions on the grounds of religion, belief, political opinion, race, sex or any other grounds are prohibited. The principles of equal treatment and non-discrimination function in the relationship between the State and the individual. Given that article 1 of the Constitution is not directly applicable in lawsuits between private individuals, however, it therefore only applies in cases between the State and private individuals. There is no Constitutional Court in the Netherlands, but pursuant to article 94 of the Constitution, the judiciary interprets national law in accordance with binding international law. Human rights also take effect in interactions between individuals. The so-called "horizontal effect" is explained in the Equal Treatment Act, which addresses direct and indirect unequal treatment on the basis of religion or belief, political orientation, race, gender, nationality, sexual orientation and marital status.

76. A key feature of the education system in the Netherlands, guaranteed under article 23 of the Constitution, is freedom of education, which is intended as the freedom to found schools (freedom of establishment), to organize the teaching in schools (freedom of organization of teaching) and to determine the principles on which they are based (freedom of conviction). People have the right to found schools and to provide teaching on the basis of religious, ideological or educational beliefs. As a result, there are both public and private schools. Public schools are

open to all children, regardless of religion or outlook, and provide education on behalf of the State. Public schools are subject to public law and are governed by a municipal council or other public legal entity.

77. In the Netherlands, education is compulsory for children from 5 to 15 years of age. In addition, since 2007, all young people under 18 years of age are required to attend school until such time as they attain a basic qualification, such as a senior general secondary or pre-university education certificate or a senior secondary vocational education certificate. Young people under 18 years of age who are no longer enrolled in full-time education are required to follow a full-time programme combining work and study until they have obtained one of the required certificates.

Switzerland

78. Switzerland is not a party to the UNESCO Convention against Discrimination in Education (1960), and the country did not report to the seventh consultation of member States on the implementation of the Convention and the recommendation against discrimination in education.

79. The Constitution of Switzerland establishes the framework for its anti-discrimination protections by providing the basic principles for State and cantonal legislation. Under article 2, the greatest possible equality of opportunity among its citizens is ensured. Article 8 provides that everyone shall be equal before the law and prohibits discrimination on the basis of origin, race, gender, age, language, social position, way of life, religious, ideological or political conviction or because of physical, mental or psychological disability. In addition, in the Constitution, the need for promoting equality and non-discrimination between men and women and ensuring that persons with disabilities are able to effectively participate in society is recognized.

80. According to article 19 of the Constitution, the right to an adequate and free primary school education is guaranteed. According to article 62.1 of the Constitution, the cantons shall be responsible for the system of school education. They shall ensure the provision of an adequate primary school education to all children. Primary school education shall be mandatory and be managed or supervised by the State. At State schools, instruction shall be free of charge. The cantons shall ensure that adequate education is provided to meeting the needs of all children and young people with disabilities up to 20 years of age. Where harmonization of school education is not achieved by means of coordination in the areas of age of enrolment in school and compulsory school attendance, the duration and objectives of levels of education and the transition from one level to another, as well as the recognition of qualifications, the State shall issue regulations to achieve such harmonization. The cantons shall participate in the drafting of federal legislation on school education that affects cantonal responsibilities, and special account shall be taken of their opinions.

81. The education system of Switzerland is characterized by federalism and organized in a decentralized manner. Primary responsibility for education lies with the cantons. They are responsible for the education system, except where the Constitution declares the State, or the State and the cantons together, to be competent. In matters requiring a joint solution, the cantons coordinate between each other. For children and young people with special educational needs, the cantons provide appropriate schooling for students up to 20 years of age.

Annex

Educational statistics for countries reporting to the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women at its sixty-fifth session: gross enrolment ratios of women and men and gender parity index

Country	Year	Gross enrolment ratio, primary		Gross enrolment ratio, primary, gender parity index	Gross enrolment ratio, secondary		Gross enrolment ratio, secondary, gender parity index	Gross enrolment ratio, tertiary		Gross enrolment ratio, tertiary, gender parity index
		Female	Male		Female	Male		Female	Male	
Antigua and Barbuda	2009	100.63	104.92	0.96	108.06	109.01	0.99	19.84	9.21	2.15
	2010	98.81	107.92	0.92	106.70	105.70	1.01	22.68	9.06	2.50
	2011	96.46	104.86	0.92	105.66	106.58	0.99	18.59[a]	9.70[a]	1.92[a]
	2012	94.51	101.27	0.93	112.88	97.94	1.15	31.15	15.07	2.07
	2013	–	–	–	–	104.01	–	–	–	–
Argentina	2009	111.19	112.83	0.99	92.83	82.41	1.13	85.08	56.37	1.51
	2010	109.80	111.83	0.98	94.22	82.44	1.12	89.16	59.14	1.51
	2011	107.68	109.00	0.99	95.36	86.15	1.11	94.74	60.66	1.56
	2012	112.20	113.73	0.99	109.76	100.77	1.09	96.87	61.59	1.57
	2013	109.68	111.13	0.99	110.27	102.50	1.08	99.00	61.54	1.61
Armenia	2009	111.22	115.44	1.16	105.14	89.86	1.17	60.74	39.28	1.55
	2010	–	114.48	–	–	–	–	63.13	40.27	1.57
	2011	–	106.71	–	–	–	–	63.20	40.98	1.54
	2012	–	102.78	–	–	–	–	55.30	37.32	1.48
	2013	–	–	–	–	–	–	51.77	39.23	1.32
Bangladesh	2009	102.18[a]	97.46[a]	1.05[a]	50.41	46.74	1.08	7.86	13.13	0.60
	2010	105.86[a]	99.58[a]	1.06[a]	53.08	47.27	1.12	–	–	–
	2011	115.14[a]	108.74[a]	1.06[a]	54.53	47.34	1.15	10.86	15.66	0.69
	2012	–	–	–	57.04	50.16	1.14	11.21	15.22	0.72
	2013	–	–	–	60.65	56.06	1.08	–	–	–
Belarus	2009	104.72	105.41	0.99	107.77	111.19	0.97	89.18[a]	60.53[a]	1.47[a]
	2010	103.35	103.54	1.00	105.27	108.75	0.97	94.44[a]	65.24[a]	1.45[a]
	2011	101.15	101.27	1.00	104.49	108.03	0.97	101.32[a]	70.98[a]	1.43[a]
	2012	99.00	98.95	1.00	105.08	108.83	0.97	105.98[a]	75.77[a]	1.40[a]
	2013	97.86	97.74	1.00	104.95	107.43	0.98	105.13	77.71	1.35

Country	Year	Gross enrolment ratio, primary		Gross enrolment ratio, primary, gender parity index	Gross enrolment ratio, secondary		Gross enrolment ratio, secondary, gender parity index	Gross enrolment ratio, tertiary		Gross enrolment ratio, tertiary, gender parity index
		Female	Male		Female	Male		Female	Male	
Bhutan	2009	107.85	105.81	1.02	61.79	61.72	1.00	4.73	7.74	0.61
	2010	110.68	108.16	1.02	66.66	65.58	1.02	5.28	8.64	0.61
	2011	111.94	110.25	1.02	71.02	68.05	1.04	7.08	10.34	0.68
	2012	111.88	110.09	1.02	75.77	71.55	1.06	7.68	11.15	0.69
	2013	105.43	104.27	1.01	79.90	74.65	1.07	9.24	12.55	0.74
Burundi	2009	122.71	129.50	0.95	16.24	23.44	0.69	–	–	–
	2010	129.24	133.72	0.97	18.69	27.15	0.69	2.16	4.20	0.51
	2011	133.95	136.31	0.98	21.21	30.03	0.71	1.83	4.22	0.43
	2012	132.80	133.83	0.99	23.71	32.26	0.73	2.33	5.10	0.46
	2013	130.29	130.63	1.01	28.45	36.26	0.78	2.65	1.00	0.42
Canada	2009	99.05	98.93	1.00	101.42	103.85	0.83	–	–	–
	2010	98.94	98.45	1.00	101.15	103.59	–	–	–	–
	2011	98.64	97.97	1.01	102.32	104.45	0.85	–	–	–
	2012	100.22	99.20	1.01	110.12	110.41	0.86	–	–	–
	2013	121.21	–	–	–	–	0.86	–	–	–
Estonia	2009	103.94	103.99	0.98	94.60	101.62	1.02	85.19	49.21	1.73
	2010	105.32	103.80	0.98	95.11	105.27	1.00	85.85	51.63	1.66
	2011	106.64	101.85	1.00	96.08	108.06	0.99	86.85	54.91	1.58
	2012	106.94	101.86	1.00	97.18	108.08	0.99	88.13	57.07	1.54
	2013	108.12	100.97	0.99	104.77	109.02	0.99	88.12	58.68	1.50
Honduras	2009	114.61	115.16	1.00	–	–	–	–	–	–
	2010	116.32	116.83	1.00	79.99	65.47	1.22	22.01	19.32	1.14
	2011	115.74	116.61	0.99	80.22	66.18	1.21	–	–	–
	2012	112.72	113.80	0.99	79.47	65.75	1.21	23.65	17.39	1.36
	2013	109.99	111.57	0.99	77.35	64.17	1.21	22.49	17.98	1.36
Netherlands	2009	107.96	109.81	0.98	120.68	122.82	0.98	65.95	59.05	1.12
	2010	108.54	109.75	0.99	122.19	124.04	0.99	68.87	61.59	1.12
	2011	108.36	109.34	0.99	128.14	129.98	0.99	82.13	73.34	1.12
	2012	107.13	108.01	0.99	128.86	131.43	0.98	82.50	74.67	1.10
	2013	105.72[a]	106.57[a]	0.99[a]	129.76[a]	131.58[a]	0.99[a]	–	–	–

Country	Year	Gross enrolment ratio, primary		Gross enrolment ratio, primary, gender parity index	Gross enrolment ratio, secondary		Gross enrolment ratio, secondary, gender parity index	Gross enrolment ratio, tertiary		Gross enrolment ratio, tertiary, gender parity index
		Female	Male		Female	Male		Female	Male	
Switzerland	2009	102.30	102.80	1.00	93.29	97.29	0.96	50.21	49.83	1.01
	2010	102.34	102.82	1.00	94.39	97.26	0.97	52.51	53.07	0.99
	2011	102.61	103.12	1.00	94.93	97.38	0.97	54.11	54.56	0.99
	2012	102.78	103.03	1.00	94.81	97.57	0.97	55.48	55.52	1.00
	2013	–	–	–	–	–	–	56.63	55.92	1.01

Note: A dash indicates data not available.

[a] Data based on national estimates.